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DOCUMENTS

*Letters of Ebenezer Huntington, 1774-1781.*¹

EBENEZER HUNTINGTON was born at Norwich, Connecticut, December 26, 1754, the fourth son of General Jabez Huntington. After preparation at the grammar school at Lebanon he entered Yale College, in October 1771, where he was graduated in 1775. The same year he received an honorary degree of A.B. from Harvard College. Already, on the outbreak of hostilities in April, 1775, he had joined the army before Boston as a volunteer. In September he received a commission as first lieutenant in Captain Chester's company of the Connecticut regiment commanded by Colonel Samuel Wyllys. In June, 1776, he was appointed a captain in that regiment. Toward the end of the year he was made deputy adjutant-general, and deputy paymaster-general to the troops on the North River under the command of Major-General Heath. In January, 1777, he was appointed a major under Colonel Samuel B. Webb in one of the sixteen additional regiments which Congress had authorized General Washington to raise. He was with Washington at Valley Forge, and in the passage of the Delaware on the night of December 24. In 1778, Colonel Webb having been made a prisoner, and the lieutenant-colonel being sick, Ebenezer Huntington commanded the regiment and marched it to Newport to reinforce the troops intended for the attack on Rhode Island. On October 10, 1778, the lieutenant-colonel having resigned, Huntington was promoted to that position. In 1781, as lieutenant-colonel in a regiment of light infantry, he marched from the North River to Yorktown, and served at the siege of that place. From 1792 to 1823, he was adjutant-general of the state of Connecticut, and from 1799 to 1805 he was also major-general of the third division of the Connecticut militia. He was actively interested in the establishment of the turnpike between Norwich and New London, the first in the state (1791), in the establishment of the first insurance company at Norwich (1794), and of its bank (1796), of which he was president for many years. In 1798 he was appointed a brigadier-

¹ For the following letters we are indebted to Miss Perkins, of Norwich, Connecticut, a granddaughter of their writer.

general in the provisional army raised by the United States at that time. From 1810 to 1811, and from 1817 to 1819, he was a member of Congress. He was an excellent disciplinarian, and a man of great dignity and force of character. He was twice married, and died on June 17, 1834. The letters here printed should be brought into connection with the letters of his brother Jedidiah Huntington, which are printed in the *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Fifth Series, IX. 493-518, with the letters of Jedidiah and Joshua, another brother, printed in the same society's *Proceedings*, Second Series, VII. 355-360, and with the letters printed in the three volumes of the *Correspondence of Colonel Samuel Blachley Webb*, edited by Mr. Worthington C. Ford. A portrait of Gen. Ebenezer Huntington is given in Miss Caulkins's *History of Norwich*, ed. 1866, facing p. 419.

I. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.¹

NEW HAVEN April 15th 1774

Hon^d Sir In your last p^r Esq^r Sherman you wrote me that you Intend to send a horse for me next may, should be glad if it is not Inconvenient, you would Please to send of your own family with it, for I have Several old Clothes that I want to have at Home, and Cannot Carry them myself with other Necessaries.

The Vacancy² begins Generally the 6th Day of May, towards Night, but as it Comes on friday, so that Scholars that live at any great Distance, Can not get home that week, the President and tutors will (I believe) let them go away on thursday.

Last Monday was freemans meeting here when they made Choice of Esq^r Bishop the first Deputy and after going round two or three times more made Choice of Esq^r Darling the Second Deputy.³ After that they tried hard to vote in the Petition which was drawn up at the Convention in Midletown but Could not Effect it. at last they Divided the house and got it in by three Majority have nothing further to write you but am in all Respects your Affectionate and Dutiful son

EBENEZER HUNTINGTON

P S The Deputies in this County are Pretty much as they were Last Year there are but 3 New ones in this County.

II. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

ROXBURY CAMP June 25th 1775

Hon^d Sir

As I seldom have written to you perhaps you may think it is owing to Negligence, but I Assure you that is not the Case it is owing to my being

¹Of Norwich, the writer's father.

²The vacation at Yale College, where the writer was at this time a student.

³Samuel Bishop and Thomas Darling represented New Haven in the General Assembly of May, 1774.

so Prodigiously Hurried for the fall business in Flaxseed time is nothing to be Compared to the fatigue I undergo daily, get to bed att 11 oClock and up as soon as light appears with a great deal of Care on my hands.

Nothing has happen^d Lately worth Mentioning Except Yesterday, about 1 oClock the Regulars began firing from their breastwork and block house upon our lowermost Centinels and main guard but did no harm. they Continued their fire till about 3 oClock. then they hove severall Shells Carcases &C with a few shott from their Cannon. about four oClock two of our men very Imprudently ran down upon the neck to destroy the house their main guard was kept in, Suspecting they were then out, but they were fired upon by about thirty of the Regulars, who killed them, then went up to the bodies of the Dead and every one to a man thrust his Bayonet into their bodies. they might have Easily taken them as they were both unarm^d but they rather choose to destroy them than to take them Prisoners. (a disgrace to the name of britons).¹

Our men in General did not regard their firing one half so much as they do a Shower of hail. three men belonging to the Train of Artillery from Rhode Island Espyed a Shell falling ran up to it knocked out the Phiz and brought it up to the General with almost two Pounds of Powder in it. it is Strange that our People regard their firing no more than they do, but it is Certainly true they do not Pay any Attention to it.²

We hear from Boston by a Gentleman who made his Escape from thence in a fishingboat that Maj^r Pitcairn and Maj^r Sheriff and Col^o Williams are Certainly killed and about thirty other Officers³ and about twelve hundred Privates killed and wounded so that their loss is in a greater Proportion than it was in the Lexington Battle. the number of Wounded from Connecticut is 23 13 Missing. N Hampshire, 19 Missing Seventy four Wounded. as to the loss the Massachusetts Sustained I have not been able to Learn.

I am well and have been Well Ever since I left home and as to Coming home in July I do not think at Present that I Can be With you so soon but Cannot tell should be Glad you would get a Certificate from President Daggett that I am in Regular Standing at College and likewise a Recommendation as I imagine I can have a Degree without Going to Connecticut for it if I have it Certifyed that I am in Regular Standing, for Doct^r Langdon hath given me Encouragement that he will give me one if N Haven President refuses it if I am denyed it only because of my tarry from College this Summer and my leaving it without Liberty in the Alarm Last April.⁴

I am Your Dutifull Son EBENEZER HUNTINGTON.

¹ Heath's *Memoirs*, pp. 22, 23; diary of Samuel Bixby, in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, 1875-1876, p. 288; diary of Ezekiel Price, *ibid.*, 1863-1864, p. 192; Heath, *ibid.*, 1858-1860, p. 295.

² See Frothingham, *Siege of Boston*, p. 213.

³ The British official account, *Remembrances*, 1775, p. 99, gives 21 officers killed (or mortally wounded) in the battle of Bunker Hill. Among them were Major Pitcairn of the marines and Major Williams of the 52d. Major Sheriff of the 47th was not killed.

⁴ The writer received his A.B. degree from Yale College and also, in the same year, an honorary degree of A.B. from Harvard.

III. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

Hon^d Sir

CAMP AT ROXBURY, June 29th 1775

I receiv^d your letter p^r Mery Yesterday with a dozen of flints : you wonder why I want so many ; the reason is this, My store is so situated that in Case the regulars should Come out I cannot move any thing out of it ; therefore I shall have no reason for not fighting to defend it, which had I no other reason would be Sufficient to Induce me to be Prepared for Defence.

My Chest got safe to hand p^r M^r Morgan but was most grievously disappointed in not finding one or two Striped Jacketts in it, which I much wanted and which might have been sent very Easily.

In my last to you I made mention about a degree, I informed you that there was a Chance of my having a degree Conferr^d upon me by Doct^r Langdon ; Should be glad to have Liberty from you to purchase a suit of Clothes as my light Clothes were much dirtied for want of a Change before my Chest Came, which Obliges Me to ask Liberty for a new suit to make me appear Properly Cloth^d at such a time, should I succeed, but at the same time would not be over Desirous as I am disposed to be as frugal as Possible ; I understand the Assembly are Called together Concerning raising more troops. should it so happen that Chester¹ should be promoted and M^r Webb should get the Command of that Com^y should be Extremely happy in having a first Lieu^{ts} Birth under him at the same time would say that I would not Except of a Second Lieu^t Birth under him nor any man in the world and Quit my business. I find that three fourths of the Captains in the Province Pay are as unfit for their Station as I Should be for a Gen^l in Command, not flattering myself would venture to say that I look upon myself fit for a Captaincy.

As to news have none but what you have hear^d. I am in all Respects with proper Regards your Dutiful Son

EBEN HUNTINGTON.

N B Should be Glad you would show the lines above to some member of the lower house² that would try to get me the birth above mention^d

IV. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.³

Dear Brother

ROXBURY CAMP, Octo^r 3^d 1775.

With Pleasure I fulfill my obligations to you in the Letter way. I should have wrote to you before but the great uneasiness which hath

¹ John Chester, who had married Huntington's sister, was captain of the ninth company in the second Connecticut regiment. Samuel B. Webb, a brother-in-law of Chester, was his first lieutenant. *Colonial Records of Connecticut*, XIV. 425 ; *Correspondence of Samuel B. Webb*, I. 44.

² Huntington's father, to whom the letter is addressed, was a member of the upper house.

³The letter is addressed "To Mr. Andrew Huntington, Merchant, Norwich, fav of Cap^t Trumbull." Andrew, the writer's brother, was the second son of Hon. Jabez Huntington, the five sons being, in order of age, Jedidiah, Andrew, Joshua, Ebenezer, and Zachariah. For the episode of Dr. Benjamin Church, see Washington's *Writings*, ed. Sparks, III. 115, 116, 502-506 ; *Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, I. 84-94.

been in the Reg^t about my Commission hath taken up all my time. the matter is at Length in a measure Subsided though I can not say the Officers like the matter so well as I could wish.¹ You will be much Surprised to hear that our famous Doct^r Church that great pretended Patriot is now under a Special guard of a Captⁿ and 40 Men for Corresponding with Gage and other of his Hellish Gang. the Plot was discovered by his Miss who is now with Child by him and he owns himself the father (for he has Dismissed his Wife) she was the bearer of some of his Letters from this place to Newport to Cap^t Wallace who hath the forwarding them to Boston. she left them with a man she Supposed friendly to Doct^r Church but was mistaken who having a Curiosity to know the Contents open[ed] Them but they were wrote in Characters so that he was not able to Understand them, but Guessing the contents brought the Letters and Girl to Gen^l Washington who after an Examination and 4 Hours under guard Confess^d she Carried them from Doct^r Church. his tryal has not been yet, but Suppose it will be e'er long.

I wish that my Chest might be forwarded as I am in want of sundry things that are in the Chest. As to news more than I have wrote have not anything. I am in all Respects Your Friendly Brother

EB HUNTINGTON.

P. S. Those Letters of Doct Church's and sundry others that were taken out of his Desk all of them wrote in Character are Decyphering will give you the contents when I shall become knowing to them. Give my Love to your Wife and Other Sisters and Brothers and also your Children.

V. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

ROXBURY CAMP NOV^r 23^d 1775

Hon^d Sir

This minute I rec^d your favour by post and Observe the Contents. Am very glad that I am clear of those difficulties as to the Reg^t not only as it easies me, but as it gives you Satisfaction to hear those difficulties subside. The universal determination of the Soldiers from Connecticut seems to be for home at the Expiration of their Seven Months altho' they have been repeatedly Solicited in Gen^l Orders to tarry longer. We have great reason to fear that our Enemies knowing our Situation will Endeavour to take the Advantage of it which if they do the Consequences will be worse than it is Generally thought.

I have inclosed you a List of the Officers only of Col^o Wyllys Reg^t upon the New Arrangement, but will Endeavour to give you a list of the whole Brigade p^r next post. Orders are now given out for one Officer

¹ When the Continental commissions were announced in general orders, September 20, 1775, the appointment of Ebenezer Huntington to a lieutenancy in Chester's company caused a remonstrance; it was signed by nearly all the officers in the regiment and addressed to General Spencer. The grievance was that he did not rise by gradation or seniority. See a letter of Captain John Chester, in the *Correspondence of Samuel B. Webb*, I. 104-106. Washington's letter of dignified rebuke is printed there and in Sparks, III. 108, 109.

out of Each of the new Companies to go on the Recruiting Service. The 2^d Lieu^t of our Company is now out on that business. when he returns, I expect to have an Opportunity to go on the same business.

As to news we have none. Family in usual Health, Brother Joshua was well Yesterday. I am your very dutiful Son,

EBENEZER HUNTINGTON.

VI. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT ROXBURY Jan^y 12th 1776

Hon^d Sir

This day I rec^d your fav^r p^r M^r Nevins in which you are pleas^d to say that I have not acknowledged your fav^r in which was inclosed a letter from Cap^t Chester. That letter I have rec^d dated Jan^y 2^d. I thought I had acknowledged it or should have done it before this time.

As to filling up the new Army, it is Carried on as well as could be expected considering how disgusted the Old Soldiers went home. As for my own Part I have inlisted but a few, but the Company is as forward as some others. the other two Officers are now on the recruiting service. the Ensⁿ I hear has inlisted about 18 Men but do not know whether it may be relied upon. the other L^t has been gone but about 8 days. I made a Serg^t belonging to Wethersfield who went home and inlisted twenty two men, came to Camp and after he came to Camp was Encouraged by a Captain of the Reg^t to an Ensigncy if he would join the 22 Men to his Company accordingly the fellow left me. because I had not the Inlistment they had signed, I could not hold him nor his men. As to paying a Visit to my friends at home I lay by all thoughts of it at Present and conclude to wait till we have open^d intrenchments on Dorchester hill. I am your ever dutiful son,

EBENEZER HUNTINGTON.

P S Inlisted into Cap^t Hanchits Comp^y certain thirty nine men besides Commission^d Officers.¹

VII. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT ROXBURY 21st Jan^y 1776

Dear Brother

Your favour of the 11th Instant I this day Rec^d. (I believe) by the hands of M^r Prince. You must have heard different Accounts ere now from Quebeck than what you mention in your letter. I wish it had been as you hear^d (that is it had not been worse). Brave Montgomery is dead, but he dyed in defence of a glorious Cause, and I hope is happy. Poor Arnold escaped with a wound that Splinter^d the bone of his leg; tho' his wound was not bad, yet he was Obliged to be out so long, to make a safe retreat for his men, that he was much weakened with the loss of Blood, and very much fatigued. The Aid de Camp of Gen^l Montgom-

¹ Oliver Hanchit, captain of the tenth company, second Connecticut regiment. See *Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society*, VI. 82.

ery's was killed.¹ Maj^r Bigelow, and Meiggs are spoken highly of likewise Maj^r Ogden who acted as Major of brigade, who received a ball through his Shoulder. this young Gentleman and One Burr² who was Secretary to Col^o Arnold both came Volunteers from N Jersey, and are much spoken of as to Activity in the battle and great good Courage.

I wish to be able to give you the particulars of the whole battle but Imagine that you will be able to get it sooner through the Gov^rs Hands,³ as I make no doubt he will have the particulars. I feel very anxious about Sister Lucy.⁴ I hope you will be able to tell me that she is better by next Letter. I wish to tell you something about Dorchester but cannot, tho' Expect to be able to, by the first of Feb^r. I have enclosed you the Strength of Gen^l Spencers Brigade for your Curiosity. I venture to send it to my friends but should it get into the hands of our Enemies it might be of great damage, by showing our Weakness just at this time. you will see that it is not Exposed. I conclude by subscribing myself your friendly Brother

EBENEZER HUNTINGTON.

P S a Paper came out of Boston last friday I intended to have got it and inclosed it to you but T. Fanning first got it and has inclosed it to Brother Joshua.

VIII. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT ROXBURY March 4th 76.

Hon^d Sir

This night our Orders are to take Possession of Dorchester Hill under the Command of Brig^r Gen^l Thomas. Two thousand men including proper Officers to Parade at 6 oClock at Dorchester—to be relieved at 3 °Clock to morrow morning by three thousand men including Officers, among which are the Col^o Maj^r Chester, Maj^r Trumbull and myself. we expect a warm Engagement but at the same time think it uncertain as they must know that we shall go very strong and I hope strong enough to Repulse them should they dare to show their heads there. But the God of Battle alone can determine—who is able to save us. You will no doubt hear before this reaches you some flying Report about our taking Possession there. That you may think I am not unmindful about the danger I am going into I can tell you that my Cloaths and Papers are properly secured In case that my maker should in his great good Pleasure so ordain that I should not live to Come off the Hill.

I must beg your Prayers for us in every Difficult time and Pray that we may succeed as we trust that we are fighting the Lords Battle. from Gen^l

¹ Two aids were killed, Capts. McPherson and Cheeseman.

² Timothy Bigelow, Return J. Meigs (afterward postmaster-general), Matthias Ogden and Aaron Burr.

³ Governor Jonathan Trumbull, whose daughter Faith (d. November 23, 1775) had been the wife of Jedidiah Huntington. See Stuart's *Trumbull*, pp. 194–196.

⁴ Lucy Coit, first wife of Andrew Huntington, died May 9, 1776.

Spencers Brigade there are going this night 9 Cap^{ts} 27 Subalterns 42 Serg^{ts} 42 Corp^s 708 Rank and file. at 3 o'clock to morrow morning 12 Cap^{ts} 36 Subalterns 57 Serg^{ts} 57 Corp^s 863 Rank and file. I had like to have forgot to Acknowledge a Letter rec^d the night before Brother went from this, the reason was because I was unwell but am better now.

I have no news to write further but remain your ever Dutiful Son

EBENEZER HUNTINGTON

Respects to Mamma. Love to brothers, and Sisters.

IX. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

ROXBURY CAMP 7th March 1776

Hon^d Parent

Dorchester Hills are at last taken Possession of by our People¹ who went on in the Even^g following the 4th March in a Party of 2000 men including Proper Officers under the Command of Brigadier Gen^l Thomas who began two forts, one on each of the high hills, and two small redoubts just as you Pass the neck which Redoubts were built to Play upon the floating Batteries that should attempt to annoy our People Passing the Neck. This Party was reliev^d at 3 o'clock next morning by a larger Party of 3000 men Including Proper Officers. The Party was increas^d from 2 to 3000 in Expectation of an Attack as soon as they should discover us, but we were unhappily mistaken—I say unhappily, because I believe it would have Put an End to the War in the N England Colonies, had an Action taken Place. We went on so well Prepar^d that had they come out with a number suff^t to withstand us, the town would have been in the hands of our great and brave Gen^l Putnam in a little time after they had come out.

I wrote you the 4th March intended to have sent you p^r M^r Hyde but he has not taken it and I now send it p^r Post.

I should Lengthen the letter but the Post is waiting.

I am your Dutiful Son, EBEN^r HUNTINGTON

X. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT ROXBURY March 21st 76.

Hon^d Sir

Since we have taken Possession of Dorchester hill I have had the pleasure of receiving two letters from you the dates I have forgot and as the letters are both out of my Pocket you will excuse my acknowledging them Otherways.

When Doctor Turner set out from this Place I was in Boston and Could not write to you but desir^d him to inform you that I wanted a horse to be sent to me immediately as I then expected that the troops would march to N. York very soon and that I should march with them,

¹ Washington to the President of Congress, March 7; Heath, *Memoirs*, pp. 40, 41; diary of Ezekiel Price, in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, 1863–1864, p. 240; *Correspondence of Samuel B. Webb*. I. 134, 135.

but since he went away, the Comp^y which I had the Care of has been fill^d up and the Captaincy given to Jed^h Hyde¹ which has so much oblig^d me and all my friends that this morning By good advice I shall wait on his Excellency to resign my Commission unless something can be done to Satisfaction, tho' at the same time I request a horse to be sent. Last Sunday our troops marched in and took Possession of the town of Boston after the regulars had evacuated it which they did about four o'clock Sunday morning after Plundering every thing they wanted without respect to Persons. they were in so great fear of our following them as they quitted the Neck that they had filled up the streets in several Places with Old Casks to stop our Progress and ran off with great Haste and all the signs of fear Possible to be shewn. The town of Boston is not so much destroy^d as I expected tho' it is destroy^d more at the North and at the south End than any where Else. M^r Cutlers family are well I have din^d there breakfasted and drank there in the afternoon.

Maj^r Chester and myself got Lodgings at M^r Rowes² the first night we enter^d town and had an Offer of a bed there as long as we Should Chuse to stay in town besides we had an Offer of a bed at two other Places at any time when Convenient for us.

I Expect to be with you before the next week is out and Can give you the particulars of three days adventures in town but at Present shall only Subscribe myself your ever dutiful Son,

EB HUNTINGTON

XI. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT ROXBURY March 24th 1776.

Hon^d Sir

I wrote you p^r post since which have rec^d a letter from you p^r M^r W^m Gale and a horse. When I wrote you p^r Post I inform^d you I was that day going to Cambridge to resign my Commission which I thought I should do but when I waited on his Excellency he seemed not a little Surprized that I should wait on him with such a request, and Gave me a very severe Reprimand. After a long talk with the Gen^l he told me that If I could not think better by the time I should wait on him again he would give me a Dismission. Yesterday Brother Jed^s went to Cambridge and saw the Gen^l and talked upon the Subject but did not take a Dismission for me but Obtain^d Liberty of the Gen^l for himself and me to have a furlough as soon as the fleet should sail out of this Harbour whose motion I now await. as soon as they sail, we shall set out for Nor-

¹ According to the returns printed in Force's *Archives*, Fourth Series, IV. 643, Jedidiah Hyde had been a captain in the 22d Continental regiment since January 1, and Ebenezer Huntington his first lieutenant.

² John Rowe, a prominent Boston merchant, whose diary was edited by the late Hon. Edward L. Pierce for the Massachusetts Historical Society; see *Proc.*, Second Series, X. 97, entry for March 18. The house, which stood on the north side of Pond Lane (Bedford Street), was afterwards the home of Prescott the historian; there is a picture of it in the quarto edition of Ticknor's *Life of Prescott*.

³ Jedidiah Huntington, now colonel of the 17th Continental regiment of infantry.

wich. I expect to take your further Directions about Resignation, tho' am determin^d for myself never to act as a Subaltern Officer again and Jed Hyde to have a Captaincy.

I am in all Respects Your Dutiful Son,

EBEN^r HUNTINGTON.

XII. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

N YORK CAMP June 23^d 1776.

Hon^d Sir

Your favour of the 11th Instant I have rec^d and several others since I left Norwich which I should have answer^d had I not told my mamma as I left home that I would not write a letter home untill I had the appointment to a Captaincy (unless in a Case of absolute Necessity) which is the only reason.

I have now the pleasure to inform you that there is discover^d the most Hellish and Diabolical Plott¹ that ever hath been plann^d since the Powder Plott, that of destroying our Gen^l Officers and Magazines also the City under the guidance of that Infamous Villain Tryon, and we suppose the Mayor of this City² as the Mayor and about thirty others are Confin^d on Suspicion and Suspicion well founded. they had determin^d to murder our Gen^l Officers when a Signal should be given from the Asia, burn the City blow up the Magazines and attempt to destroy the Army, for which Purpose they had bribed some of the army that they might more Easily effect the Purpose but kind heaven it seemed tho' he Suffer^d them to lay a Plott has interfer^d in our behalf and Sav^d us from those designing Children of the Devil who Plotted our destruction. The Gen^l deeply affected at such a plott has wisely and prudently doubled his Guard in and about the City and ordered patrolling partys to be Patrolling all Night.

Every Precaution which a wise and prudent Gen^l could take, our Worthy Commander has used.

The Company I now Command is the one that I was in before and Cap^t Hyde gone into the Company that was Maj^r Wells. Your Expressions of Fear as to my keeping too much Company, I fear arises from Information as I am Conscientious of doing it formerly, viz on my first Arrival here, but since that have kept but very little. I was Oblig^d to get Seventy two Dollars of Brother when he was here by reason of being oblig^d to board out in the City alth'o at a Private house only my board was £13 15 Y Currency for about five Weeks besides I was necesarily put to Considerable other Expen^{ce}.

I am very sorry that our Assembly did not see fit to Promote some of our Officers here in the Army, upon several Accounts: in the first Place, as I think they most deserve it, in the Next Place it is following the Example of Pensylvania, who promoted a number of their Officers, who

¹ The Hickey Plot. See *Minutes of the Trial and Examination of Certain Persons* etc. London, 1786.

² David Matthews.

were in the Rifle Battalion at Cambridge, and besides those very men who are now in the army, will have men Come from Connecticut higher in Commision than them who could not have got an Ensigncy last May is a year ago when some that are here had Captaincys, but I can readily suppose they acted on good Principles.

Maj^r Trumbull¹ has rec^d the Appointment of Dep^r Adj^t Gen^l, that is Adj^t Gen^l for the Northward and sets out to morrow with Gen^l Gates for Quebeck or the Northern Army, and I believe has made a vacancy for my worthy Classmate, Peck,² Adj^t of Col^o Huntingtons Reg^t, or Else, for Keyes, or Charles Whiting, but rather think that Peck will get it.

This from your dutiful Son

EBEN^r HUNTINGTON.

XIII. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT N YORK 10th August 1776

Dear Brother

Yesterday, I wrote you a long letter, and going into the City last Evening, to Col^o Chesters, I lost it in which I Endeavour^d to Clear my Character, for not Writing oftener but it seems I was not permitted to send it. I could wish that I had not lost it, as I think that I should have fully Satisfied you, but never mind that says you, if it is material, give the reasons over again, and so I will part of them. Well then—A regiment of Officers to Quarrel with, who were Continually exerting themselves, to Injure me, and my Character. Can you believe that they went to Every Reg^t on the Ground which is a fact I say and enquir^d the number of Officers from Norwich, then Petition^d to the Gen^l setting forth the Number in s^d Petition, and most Scandalously abusing my Character, to prevent my Getting a Captaincy. but the Gen^l, that Justice might be done, desir^d Gen^{ls} Green and Lord Sterling to decide the dispute, before which Gentlemen M^r Champion and myself, set forth our Pretensions, butt the Regiment hearing that the matter was like to be in my fav^r, drew up another Petition and Presented to the Gentlemen Arbitrators (as soon as we had given our pretensions) unbeknown to me, with every injurious and malicious insinuation against me, that they had ingenuity to invent, setting forth that unless the Captaincy was given to M^r Champion all the Officers in the Reg^t would resign their Commissions, which had the Effect I could wish, for the Gentlemen seeing how they interested themselves, took no notice of it, tho^t I had wrote an answer as soon as I found out they had Petition^d, but it was too late as they had determin^d in my fav^r, about as soon as they rec^d the Regimental Petition. After the dispute was settled, I was to receive my Commission but Gen^l Washington being Oblige[d] to go to Philadelphia I did not receive it till June, all which time I had but very little peace from the Officers ; so little that I did not

¹ John Trumbull, the painter. See his *Autobiography*, p. 26.

² Trumbull had been brigade-major to General Spencer. His place was filled, July 28, by the promotion of William Peck, Yale 1775, adjutant of the 17th Continental regiment of infantry. Charles Whiting was adjutant of the 22d.

pretend to Walk out, without Sword and Pistols (and well Loaded) as I expected to be Insulted, which had it been the Case, I should have done that which might have given my friends uneasiness, for I was almost as a desperado, but matters are now easy, and I believe I am in a fair way to live unmolested.

Night before last about 1 °Clock all the Regiments in the Lines were order^d out under Arms, to receive orders to lye on their Arms, as the Ships of War in the Edge of the Evening had all hauld without the Transports and they (the Transports) had orders to be Clean ready to receive the troops on board who are now on Staten Island.¹ We Expect an Attack Every high Water, and have the Strictest orders to the Officers and Soldiers not to be absent from Camp without Leave from the Col^o I am, after giving love and Compliments to friends and Acquaintance,

Your Friendly Brother

EBEN^r HUNTINGTON.

XIV. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT N. YORK 5th Sept^r 1776

Hon^d Sir

Three days since I wrote a Letter for you and not knowing any immediate Conveyance I forwarded it to Kingsbridge desiring it might be forwarded p^r the first Opportunity. This will be forwarded as far as Colchester p^r M^r Norton who rides (as Camp Post) from that Place. I believe it may be relied on that those who are missing² from Col^o Huntington's Reg^t are 1 L^t Col^o, 6 Cap^{ts} 6 L^{ts} 6 Ens^{es} 1 Adj^t 21 Serg^{ts} and 100 Rank and file 2 Drums and fifes. the L^t Col^o³ Cap^t Brewster and Cap^t Bissell we have intelligence from who are Prisoners and Maj^r Wells of Col^o Wyllis's Reg^t Col^o Clark and Maj^r Wells have wrote p^r flag. Every thing is at this time in a Critical situation but we hope we are able to maintain our Present Post.

On the Even^g following the 2^d Instant at 11 °Clock a Ship of War went up the East River and Came to an Anchor against Turtle Bay where we had about 33 Hundred Bb^s flour Stored. Our People removed all the flour that Night and Next Morning paid her a handsome Salute from two twelve Pounders which were drawn down to the Edge of the River about Day Break. they Hulled her thirteen times which was so disagreeable to her that she Slipped her Cable and Pushed up behind Blackwells Island (an Island which Extends from Hellgate towards N York about three Miles) Just as she Came to Anchor our People had the Good Fortune to heave an Eight Inch Howit through her Side which burst in her Hole. Tho' her Hull was Secured from the Shott from our Cannon Her Riggin

¹ The passage did not in fact take place till August 22.

² As a result of the battle of Long Island, August 27. The return for the 17th Regiment, printed in Force's *Archives*, Fifth Series, III. 717, gives 63 more of the rank and file as missing, but otherwise agrees with the statement made above.

³ Joel Clark.

and Yards were not and this Morning finding that She Could not lye safe at her Station has fell down towards N York about a Mile, against a Spot of Marshy land in hopes we could not molest her. but I am in hopes we shall be Able to do it. Maj^r Crane of the Artillery is Endeavouring to get some Artillery plac^d so as to reach her.¹

Doct^r Turner arrived here Yesterday and Doct^r Lee. Our friends are as well as usual. Poór Militia! they desert, Numbers of them, being very uneasy, their reasons no doubt you will have, as we are in hopes they will not go unask^d and unpunish^d. We hear that Gen^l Lee is on his March and is to be at Elizabethtown this Night (but not from Head Quarters). Col^o Sam^l B. Webb Ad Cong to his Excellency is so unwell as to be Oblig^d to Ride in to the Country.

I am in Health Dear Parent Your

Dutiful Son

EB^r HUNTINGTON.

P S Since I wrote the above I have got the other letter I wrote you 3 days ago and now inclose it.

XV. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT WEST CHESTER, 6th Octo^r 1776

Hon^d and dear Sir

Several of yours have come to hand since which I have not wrote before this, the date of my last I am not able to mention. One of Yours p^r Cap^t Perkins, one p^r Erastus, and one p^r M^r John Leffingwell I have rec^d. the others (if any have come) I do not recollect.

The Resolves of Congress relative to raising of 88 battalions, you have undoubtedly paid attention to before this time.² As the matter is to be under the direction of the Assembly, I hope they will be inform^d as to the Characters of some Particular Officers. Among the Officers, that will be Provided for, I hope that Robert Warner 1st L^t, Elias Stillwell 2^d Lieut, Jonth Hart 2^d Lieut, Sam^l Richards Ensign, and Thomas Hender Ensign, will meet with good Success. several others of my Acquaintance in the Army I might with Propriety mention, but as It would make the matter tedious, I would not do it. I hope, Should I have the Offer of a Captaincy (and nothing better) that I might have the Good Luck to have Warner, Stillwell or Hart and Ensign Richards in my Company.

I have wrote a line to Esq^r Benjⁿ Huntington³ and inclosed it unsealed hope you will deliver it if it meets with your Approbation. I am dear and Hon^d Sir your dutiful Son

EBEN HUNTINGTON

¹ See Washington's *Writings*, ed. Sparks, IV. 74.

² See *Journals of Congress*, September 16, 1776. These resolves left the appointment of officers, general officers excepted, to the several states.

³ A member of the Connecticut Council of Safety.

XVI. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

CAMP AT WESTCHESTER 11th October 1776

Dear Brother.

Whether it is through your Negligence, or mine, that so few Letters pass between us, I will not say, but this I can say, that, If it is mine, it has happen^d by reason of duty, in paying attention to the Reg^t as you will readily Imagine, there being not but Nine Officers of my Rank, in the Whole Brigade to do duty. Eleven days of the Nineteen last past I have been on Guard, and not a Letter of yours for a Comforter

I hope that you will be so good, as to write p^r Every Opportunity, and I can Assure you I will Endeavour, that no Opportunity shall Escape me. The Phoenix and two other Ships of War, have Passed our Chevaux de Frize and gone up the North River, and have taken two of our Row Gallies,¹ Fisher in the Crane, and Baker in the Indepen[den]ce are the Gallies that have fell into their hands besides some small Craft. the Ships with their Prizes now lie against Tarry Town, in Toppon Bay, about 10 Miles above Kingsbridge. Two Ships yesterday Came to Anchor in Harlem River, nigh the Ship, that has been there some time since. When the Ships went up the River on Wednesday there was as Brisk Firing of Cannon as need be, but never a Man hurt as I have yet hear^d of. I am dear Sir your Friendly Brother

EB HUNTINGTON.

XVII. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

PEEKS KILL 25th Nov^r 1776

Hon^d Sir

This comes p^r M^r Grover, who can better tell you News from this Post than myself. The Anxiety I am in for the raising of a new Army is not small but to parents I think I have an undoubted right to write freely. the present appearance is very Gloomy, the British troops making head wherever they attempt, our people instead of behaving like brave men, behave like Rascalls, and to add to that, it seems that the British Troops had gone into the Jerseys, only to receive the Submission of the whole Country. People Join them almost in Captains Companies to take the oath of allegiance. besides those of the Militia who have been sent for our Assistance, leave us the minute their times are out and would not stay tho' their eternal Salvation was to be forfeited if they went home; The Perswasion of a Cicero would not any more Effect their tarry than the Niagara falls would the Kindling of a Fire. besides the slow Progress of a new army, seems as though the few that remain till the first of January, are to fall a Sacrifice to the British Savages. Dear Father, no Man unless on the Spott can have a tolerable Idea of it. Our Stores lost without an Exchange of a Shott. A Hell itself could not furnish worse beings than Subsist in the world where our army are now posted. I am dear Sir in Great fear for our Political Salvation while I subscribe myself your Dutiful Son

EBEN^r HUNTINGTON.

¹ Heath's *Memoirs*, pp. 68, 69.

XVIII. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

PEEKS KILL 2^d Dec^r, 1776*Dear Father*

As the Gen^l has this day order^d an Express to the Gov. I thought it my duty to inform you that I am well. as to acknowledging the receipt of your favours, it is not in my Power for I do not receive any. two days ago I forwarded some letters from Col^o Huntington to Col^o Trumbull to be forwarded. hope you will receive them by the time this reaches you.

Gen^l Lee and Sullivan with their Division are this day Crossing the Ferry nigh this Place going to the Jersies.¹ Col^o Chester is with them and very well. Brother Joshua was well Yesterday. About twenty Reg^{ts} from the Northward who were dismissed were Returning and hearing our Situation in the Jersies, were by Order of Gen^l Gates Embodied, and are marching to Join Gen^l Washington ; by this time we have reason to believe, are Join^d, Gen^l Gates, and Arnold at their head. Rogers who Commanded the Rangers in the british Service is Disgraced.²

A flag which went in two days ago to the Enemy were (by being Oblig^d to wait an answer) Spectators of a Scene which is pleasing. The Persons who went in with the flag were sitting in Company with a Col^o M^cDonald and some other Officers and in comes Rogers, with his hatt on, says, how do you do Gentlemen (meaning our flag of truce) but no reply was made, except by Col M^cDonald, who says, you Dam^d Rascal, why do you Presume to wear your hatt, among Gentlemen. if you are not out of the Room immediately I will kick you out, accordingly he went out. Col^o M^cDonald followed him and not shutting the door after them Col^o M^cDonald was hear^d to say, that you are an Insolent Rascal and if you Ever come into Gentlemans Company again, Where I am, I will Cane You as long as I can feel You. Rogers's Reg^t is taken from him and given to another Officer.³

I am dear Sir Your Dutiful Son

EB. HUNTINGTON.

XIX. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

PEEKS KILL 3d December 1776

Dear Father

Yesterday I wrote you p^r Express which was going to the Governour, since which nothing material has turn^d up. The Divisions under the Command of Gen^{ls} Lee and Sullivan, which were at this place when I wrote you before, have not Entirely passed the Ferry. Chester Passed Yesterday. M^r Carpenter is now at this place. he left Col^o Huntington

¹ Heath to Washington, December 2. Force's *Archives*, Fifth Series, III. 1041.

² The celebrated Robert Rogers, who had broken his parole and accepted the command of the "Queen's Rangers." Washington's *Writings*, ed. Sparks, IV. 521. See also Trumbull to Cooke, Force, Fifth Series, III. 1077.

³ It was not until the autumn of 1777 that the command of the "Queen's Rangers" was given to Simcoe.

Yesterday at his Station.¹ he was hearty and well. The slow progress of enlisting men makes me feel Anxious for the 1st of January, for sad Experience teaches me that Troops will not tarry after the time of Enlistment expires, tho' death stares them in the Face returning to their Homes. I am Informed that Maj^r Wells who was taken prisoner at Long Island,² came Yesterday to Gen^l Spencer's Quarters at White Plains on Parole. what news he brings out do not Learn. I am dear Sir Your Dutiful Son

EB. HUNTINGTON.

XX. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

PARARMUS 19th Dec^r 1776

Hon^d Sir

I have the pleasure to inform you that last sunday We had the Satisfaction of Marching into Hackinsack, in which Place we found many Arms &C and warlike stores a few. Rum, sugars, and a Great plenty of Wine. about 60 disaffected persons were taken up in a few hours, but the Gen^l finding so great a number of these People, that it would take all his division to guard them, we took about 8 Prisoners of War in and about that Place.³

The Brave Gen^l Lee was made Prisoner about Six days since by a Party of the Enemies light Horse (on his march to Join Gen Washington) about 70 Miles in the Rear of his Division. There has been several Skirmishes If we may believe Report between some Militia Reg^{ts} and the Regulars one Skirmish Certain, not very unfavourable to the Militia. the Militia took a large drove of Cattle and Sheep from the Regulars, 317 Sheep and the Rest were Cattle they had Collected for the use of their Army. Last Night we had intelligence that the Enemy were marching to Hackinsack from New York, and had got to a bridge within about 5 Mile of Hackinsack, called Acquaconack Bridge. We have no reason to doubt the truth of it, and without doubt I may be able in my next to give you some account of an Action between the Division of Gen^l Heath and their party under Col^o Leslie.⁴

I had like to have forgot to acknowledge the Receipt of two of your fav^{rs} of the 8th and 11th instant, am very sorry that you could not have fav^d me with news that the Enemy had landed at Newport and that they were dislodged by the Militia. Our troops or rather the troops under Gen^l Heath have this day been Reinforced by about 1200 Militia under the Command of Gen^l George Clinton one of the best of Men. Gen^l Washingtons Army lye on the other side of the Delaware but his head Quarters 12 Miles beyond at Bristol. Do not let the Matter about Gen^l

¹ Col. Jedidiah Huntington was at this time encamped at Ramapo in Orange County, Force, III. 1039, 1072.

² Major Levi Wells of the 22d Continental infantry.

³ See Heath's *Memoirs*, pp. 99, 100, and Heath to Washington, December 15, in Force, III. 1234.

⁴ Heath, p. 102.

Lee be mention^d as from me unless you have hear^d it some other way, as it will rather discourage the Country than otherwise. Col^o Huntington is well at this Place where we live happily. Good Living and in the best Country in the World.

Tell Mamma that I have two Pounds of good green tea which I will send her p^r first Opportunity. Compliments to all friends while I subscribe myself your Dutiful Son

EB HUNTINGTON

XXI. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

WETHERSFIELD 27th April 1777

Dear Brother

Col^o Huntington informs me that the present week is the time fixed on for you to be married.¹ I am sorry to inform you that the Prospect of my being with you at that time is small, by reason of my Col^o being absent, and of Course much business is on my hands which requires attention to, yet not despairing of my paying one Nights Visit at Norwich this Week. Should I be disapointed of seeing a brother (whose affections I ever had the good fortune to share) engage under the Sacred Bands of marriage it will not in the least diminish my Affections for him or his dear Partner, but tho' absent and not the Pleasure but of a small acquaintance with the Person engaged to, yet that small acquaintance very agreeable, I shall wish them to enjoy every Happiness this world affords. I wish she may prove a kind and Affectionate Mother to the tender Offspring of a former and most agreeable Parent (of which I do nor will not, entertain the least doubt) and a Partner to you whom you will ever love, and in whose Company you will ever be happy. had you never known the happiness of a Married State I as a Brother might have said many things to you, which now would be very improper.

Was I not engaged in the Military line a few weeks would let me know the happiness attending the Married state, which I doubt not is great as I think the Satisfaction of unbosoming oneself to a Partner who could and would share the Good and ill Fortune attending us in this world is far beyond what a Single Life affords or can do. after wishing Miss Phelps and Yourself Happiness I subscribe myself your Friendly Brother

EB HUNTINGTON

XXII. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

KING STREET 9th November 1777.

Dear Brother

I wrote you the 2^d of this Month from Fish Kills, and would have acknowledged the Rec^t of your last, did I not believe I had done it 3 Weeks ago. It would be Conferring a great favour on me if you

¹ Andrew Huntington was married on May 1, 1777, to his second wife, Hannah Phelps, of Stonington.

would as often as once a Week give me the Domestick News, and not neglect me because you dont receive my letters. you shall not have reason to blame me for Neglect, for I assure you I will write (as I ever have done) p^r every Opportunity If time can be got. In one of my former letters, I beg^d the favour of you to desire Col^o Abbott to make me a Pair of Elegant Leather Breeches (White) and don't recollect you have ever acknowledged the Receipt of the same. I wish that the Breeches might be Procured, let the price be what it will, it matters not. I wish to hear what becomes of the Privateer whether you have hear^d from her, since she left Boston, as You in your last favour inform^d me, that she was Repair^d and would soon leave Boston for a Cruize. Hath any Prise ever arriv^d that she hath taken? What is the Value? Should there arrive any Articles in any of the Prizes, which we want in the Army, wish you to procure them for the Use of this Regiment. Although I expect to leave this Regiment and the Army, before the Opening of another Years Campaign, still I have a desire to procure every article which the Reg^t may stand in Need of. I wish you to present my love to Sister H, and the rest of the Good people, whom I am determin^d to pay a Visit to in the Course of this Winter. I am dear Brother, Yours Affectionately

EBEN^r HUNTINGTON.

Deserters say that the Inhabitants in N York are putting their Effects on board Ship (very uncertain). Rivington has publish^d Burgoynes Capitulation at Large and not a Comment on them, in his Paper Acknowledges the Destruction of two ships at the Chevaux de frize one a 64 the other I forget.¹

Since friend Leonard hath been at the Northward, he hath fought a Duel, no person hurt on either side.

XXIII. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

CAMP WARREN 21^t Sept^r 1778.

My Dear Brother

Your favour of the 12th instant was handed me this day, indors^d on the back as forwarded by two Diff^t Gentleman, one at Pomphrett, and the other a Cap^t Wallace at Providence, by which you may Judge, how direct Letters Come to me. this is the first I have rec^d from you, notwithstanding that, had it been in my power to have wrote you, I would have done it with the Utmost pleasure. As to the particulars on the Island, I was (for want of time when Opportunity Offered) Oblige[d] to Refer my Father to a letter of Col^o Trumbulls to the Governour,² without giving him any of the particulars, which I could have wished to have done. As to the Bills you gave me, against M^r Whittlesey, I have Collected them and will inclose you the Money, the first Opportunity. I am very glad to hear so much Credit given the Militia for the Readiness

¹ The *Augusta*, 64, and the *Merlin*, 18, destroyed October 23, 1777, after the fight at Red Bank. Sparks, V. 113.

² See the *Autobiography* of John Trumbull, pp. 51-57.

they shew to prevent the Landing of the Enemy at N London (or rather I am *happy* to think they deserve it). I have hear^d that Father took his Head Quarters at M^r Shaws. It would have Afforded me much Satisfaction to have been in his family, on such an Occasion. I am very happy to hear that the Reports which have been Circulated, of the Action of the 29th of last Month¹ have been to the Advantage of the Reg^t, but it affords me equal pleasure, to hear that my Conduct on that Day was as Satisfactory to my friends. I Cannot but Blend the Credit of the Reg^t, and my own, if any due me, together, as the Command of the Reg^t during and Just before the Action, Devolved on me, (with two field Pieces of Artillery, and about forty men of Col^o Jacksons Reg^t, who had been detach^d in the early part of the day, as a Covering party to them) as Col^o Livingston² had left the Reg^t and rode over to the Left, to see how the Action went on, and in his Absence, rec^d a Slight Wound, by which Means he did not join the Reg^t till the Action was over, which lasted very heavy about Nine Minutes at about fifteen Rods Distance; the rest of the time was rather at Long Shott than Otherwise. It was rather an injury to the troops, who were not Engaged, as they shewed themselves desirous of a share in the Glory, and would have done honour to themselves had they had an Opportunity. The troops universally behav^d well, as far as I could make my Observations.

As to Burning Bedford,³ it appears to me one of the most Wanton Acts of Cruelty they have been Guilty of, as they met with not the least opposition, Tho' they are Capable of doing anything that the Devil Can Suggest. It is my wish, that should the fortune of War heave that Rascal, Gray, into our hands, that he should be burnt alive, in a Manner agreeable to the Indian Custom. I wish you would give me a little Account of Leonardus, as I hear his Movements have been rather Eccentric, than Otherwise. Domestick News, if any at all, as it affords me much Pleasure to hear anything in the Domestick way. I expect to set out for Boston to Morrow, or Next Day, to obtain Cloathing for the Reg^t if so, I shall be absent about Six Days, a disagreeable Piece of Business, as I must necessarily Expend much Money in doing the Business for the Reg^t, which will be lost, besides the trouble of following the Clothiers, whom I look upon to have been one of the Greatest Set of Rascals, the Publick have paid, tho' I flatter myself they are now much better since Congress have discharged the Head (*M^r Mease*)⁴ whom I look upon as a great Rascal. I have lengthened my Letter to such a Degree that you will be Impatient, tho' I should have gone further had not business intervened to prevent it.

¹ Battle of Rhode Island.

² Lieutenant-Colonel William S. Livingston, commanding the regiment during Colonel Webb's continued detention as a prisoner.

³ New Bedford, Mass., burned September 6 by Major-General Charles Grey, afterward the first Earl Grey.

⁴ An error. James Mease, clothier-general, offered his resignation by letter of September 19; but Congress on the 21st deferred consideration of it. *Journals*, III. 64.

Give my Respects to the Good General and his Lady, and Affectionate Remembrances to the Circle, and believe me

Your truly Affectionate Brother

EB HUNTINGTON

XXIV. TO JABEZ HUNTINGTON.

Hon^d Sir

QUARTERS WARREN 21st Dec^r 1778

For what reason I have so long Neglected to write to you, I know not. I now think it high time, and to inform you that we (the Connecticut Officers at this post) wait most Anxiously to know, what you will do, in your next Session. For your Conduct, in some measure, will Regulate ours. if you do any thing Spiritedly, we may Remain in Service, but if you do not, I believe the Greater part of Col^o Webbs Reg^t will resign, and I don't know but two thirds of them.

The People of Connecticut when at this Post, tell us, the Army must be made good, and the Country are all of that Opinion, and yet do nothing. If you mean to do anything, do it soon. Convince us you have not forgot us, which we have some reason to believe. Almost two Years have Passed, when we have been buoyed up with Promises at Loose Ends, (by the people in General). if you intend to feed us any Longer with Promises, you must at Least, have some formality in passing them. Procrastination is Dangerous, and more so at this time than Usual, we doubt the Willingness of our Countrymen to assist us. You cannot blame us. Our Money gone, our friends few, or none who will Lend money. Indeed we think hard that our Wages are not made at least so good as to Support us. The bare Idea of Fifty Dollars p^r Month is nothing, and my Wages is no More, it will Scarcely support me a Week, in addition to the Ration I draw. Notwithstanding the Money is so much Depreciated, almost everyone is lending a helping hand, while the Loss falls almost Entirely on the Army, who serve at fixt Wages, and who ought not to suffer in the Least by the Depreciation of the Currency. You Resolved in your Last Sessions,¹ that the Soldiers family should be Supplied, whether they sent Money or not, but it is not done, nor will it be done. Not a Day Passes my head, but some Soldier with Tears in his Eyes, hands me a letter to read from his Wife Painting forth the Distresses of his family in such strains as these, "I am without bread, and Cannot get any, the Committee will not Supply me, my Children will Starve, or if they do not, they must freeze, we have no wood, neither Can we get any. *Pray Come home.*" These Applications Affect me, my Ears *are not*, neither *shall* they be shutt to such Complaints. they are Injurious, they wound my feelings, and while I have Tongue or Pen I will busy myself to stir up my Countrymen to act like *men*, who have all at Stake, and not think to enrich themselves, by the Distresses of their brave Countrymen, in the Field. It hath been Practiz^d too long. Dont drive us to Despair, we are now on the Brink. De-

¹ See *Public Records of the State of Connecticut*, II. 134, 135.

pend upon it we cannot put up with such treatment any Longer. Spare yourselves, by Rewarding the brave.

Your Affectionate Son

E HUNTINGTON

XXV. TO JOSHUA HUNTINGTON.

Dear Brother

TIVERTON 3^d May 1779

Your favour p^r Serg^t Williams came safe to hand, as did Seven of the Eight Hams mention^d to be sent Cap^t Waterman and the bundle of Cloth ; I have Settled the matter with Comm^r Southwick, and shall Inclose you his receipt p^r next Opportunity in fav^r of M^r Fanning.

I am not much disapointed in hearing of the Fate of our Privateer Trumbull, as it is my hard fate to be Unlucky in Privateering. It shall not give me a moments uneasiness, as I am in a fair way of making a fortune, If I only can Continue in the Army two Years longer, as I receive Eighty dollars in Wages and Subsistance, Monthly, and since at this post have spent it weekly. We have been without bread or Rice more than five days out of seven, for these three Weeks past, and the Prospect remains as fair as it hath been. Excuse me in giving you a list of Prices, or Account Courant. Potatoes 24 Dollars p^r Bushel, Eggs 18^s/ p^r Dozⁿ, Veal 5^s/ p^r lb, and that to be bought but Seldom, Butter 18^s/ p^r lb and that more Seldom than Veal. Oysters nor fish to be Purchased at Present, nor have been for this fortnight past. Rum 2 Dollars p^r Jill. The Provisions we draw hath been Chiefly Salt Beef, and that alone without bread or Potatoes is tedious. It appears to me that unless the Army is better Supplied, you had better disband them now, rather than fill the Regiments. I have been as unwilling to hear trifling Complaints as any person, but had my feelings been harden^d with Steel, they would have been soften^d, by the too Just and Repeated Complaints of those who seldom Murmur. If the Fault lies at the door of any Individual, deliver him to us for a Sacrifice, as it would be more acceptable to us, if we must be starved, first to imbrue our hands in the Blood of him who brought us to it. If it is the Depreciation of the Money you are all alike Guilty, and ought to be Slaves to all Eternity to those who dare Contend for freedom. Notwithstanding the Currency is as bad or worse than nothing, the Whole department are in Arrears for Six Months and one Brigade for Seven. Hitherto the Regiment have been kept together but I dare not be answerable till tomorrow Morn^g.

This whole part of the Country are Starving for want of bread. they have been drove to the necessity of Grinding Flaxseed and oats together for bread. Is it not Possible for the State to do something else besides Promises. Promises can not feed or Clothe a Man always, Performance is sometimes necessary to make a man believe you intend to Perform. Let us await if Possible the Event of the next Session, and Possibly Hatters and Wiredrawers Can effect what wise men Cannot.

Your affectionate Brother,

E. HUNTINGTON.

I got into such a Passion that I Closed my letter before I thought of it. —I wish to know about a Horse, can you get me one at any price, nothing less than 1500 Dollars will purchase one fit to ride in this part of the World. The Evening of the 2^d Instant Eight of the Enemies Boats attempted to land about Six Miles up Taunton River, but were discover^d on which they pushed off and Returned. Nothing further worth mentioning. Love to the Circle. Yours Sincerely

EB.

XXVI. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

MORRIS TOWN 8th Feb^y 1780

Dear Sir

Your favors of the 4th and 10th Ult^o came safe to hand, tho rec^d only three days since. at the time I rec^d them I was on the lines, but have since been reliev^d.

As I have been on duty so much for four Weeks past, I have not been able to get my Hutt Compleated but am now paying my utmost attention to it and am in hopes to get it Compleated by the first of next Month, if the Weather is favorable.¹ at present I have taken Quarters in one of the Officers Hutts, where I expect to remain till my own is so far finish^d as to move into it. I observe that in your letter you mention about being Continued in the 3^d Class of the Lottery. I wish it by all means, beg you would pay attention to it for me.

I have not been able to hear a line from my good father since I left Norwich, and as I left him much unwell am very Anxious, he used to write me and as I have rec^d no line from him have Supposed that his Indisposition is greater than when I left him. I wish you would write to me particularly about him. We have nothing new in this part of the World. as to the Excursion the Enemy made at Elizabethtown, you must have had the Particulars in the Newspapers, as it hath been Published and very Exactly. Congress are now deliberating about the Reduction of some of the Reg^{ts}. what Reg^{ts} or what number will be reduc^d, I know not but suppose and wish the Greater part, as I think it very unnecessary and Expensive to keep so great a Number of Officers in Service and so few Men. Possibly I shall be one of the Number, wish it may be the Case, as I think it would be very agreeable to live at Ease, and Quietness, once more (free from the Noise and Din of Arms) and restore an Injured Constitution, too much worn in the Service of an Ungrateful Country. I think this Winter must have been a very agreeable one with you; Horses in plenty and good Sleighing, a happy Circle, plenty of the Necessaries and Comforts of life, and so free from Business as to have nothing Interfere with your Pleasures, except the Ill health of our good father should damp them.

You ask me what Number of Troops have gone from N York, who Commanded them and where bound. The Number is uncertain, Sir Henry

¹ Cf. Ebenezer Huntington's letters of January 22 and February 16 in the *Correspondence of Samuel B. Webb*, II. 242, 247.

is gone in Person, and I believe without any doubt bound to the Southward.¹

I wish my love and Respects to those with you and to whom due.

I am dear Brother

Yours Affectionately,

EBEN^r HUNTINGTON

XXVII. To—————

MOUNT PLEASANT, HUTTS 11th May 1780

Dear Sir

By a letter from Mamma rec^d some days since I find that you suppose me indebted to you for several letters, I may be for letters wrote but not for letters rec^d. I have rec^d but few letters from my friends since I left Connecticut and a *very few of them* from Norwich. I understand by a line from Brother Jed^b that his Waggon is to move towards Camp as soon as the Grass hath grown suff^e to subsist the Horses. I wish it may be soon, as I expect some stores in it. With an Expectation that I may have an Opportunity of getting a Hatt when made, I wish you to get me an Elegant beaver one made, by Kinsman or such other person as you may think proper, I wish it *very large and well made*, the Size of the Crown is rather smaller than Brother Joshuas, more than Commonly deep, and not Cock^d, that part I will do myself. I wish it may be done by the 1st of June. I am not entirely without Expectation of a Visit into Connecticut, if I should do it I shall spare a day for my Norwich friends.

Col^o Governor waiting Obliges me to Close by saying that I am dear Sir

Yours Sincerely,

EBEN^r HUNTINGTON

XXVIII. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

BUSH HUTTS N. Jersey, 4 Miles from

Posaick falls, July 7th 1780

Dear Sir

I must Acknowledge some letters from my Norwich friends, among which one from you, which should have been acknowledg^d before this, but our very rascally Situation will not admit of any Conveniency for writing, this I write on my knee. We took the field the 7th of last Month, not from Inclination but from Necessity, as the Enemy moved so near our Hutts as Oblig^d us to send our Baggage into the Rear, and for want of tents, and teams to Carry them, we have lain in the Woods without any Covering but what the Almighty gives the Brute Creation to which State we verge fast. Our whole Army when Collected amounted to about 2/3^{ds} of the force of the Enemy. When the Enemy first landed and advanced they were much harras^d by the Militia, which or some other

¹ The allusion is to Sir Henry Clinton's expedition against Charleston.

reason induced the Enemy to burn wherever they went. after lying in N Jersey some time they Manoeuvred as tho' they intended a move up the N River, in Consequence of which his Excellency march^d toward W Point, with 5 Brigades, leaving behind Maxwells and Starks Brigades. the 23^d the Enemy movd from Elizabethtown (to which Place they had Previously retir^d.) towards Springfield where our troops lay except Parties advanc^d, our People fought them as they advanc^d, but when they had got to Springfield they endeavour^d to turn our left flank at the same time pushing a heavy Column towards our Centre. our troops Repuls^d them on the left, tho' the Enemy gain^d the Pass in the Centre after about 40 Minutes very heavy firing. Col^o Angells Reg^t with some small detachments from the line fought their main force during the 40 minutes. Col^o Angells Reg^t lost 41 killed and Wounded out of about 160, Officers Included. the Enemy suffer^d much by their own accounts. our troops behav^d well and receiv^d the thanks of Gen^l Green, and the Commander in Chief. about 3 °Clock P M they retir^d, our people harassing their Rear, untill they had got within their lines which they had hove up on Elizabeth town Point. the night following they Retreated to Statten Island, and the 25th we began our March to join the Main Army which lay at Ramapough, except the Connecticut line which had moved on to W Point. We lie in the Woods as dated in the beginning of the letter, hoping to be able to have tents in a few days. The Rascally Stupidity which now prevails in the Country at large is beyond all description. they Patiently see our Illustrious Commander at the Head of 2,500 or 3,000 Ragged, tho' Virtuous and good Men, be oblig^d to put up with what no troops ever did before. Why don't you Reinforce your Army, feed them Clothe and pay them, why do you Suffer the Enemy to have a foot hold on the Continent? You Can prevent it, send your Men to the field, believe you are Americans, not suffer yourselves to be dup^d into the thought that the french will relieve you and fight your Battles, it is your own Supineness that Induc^d Congress to ask foreign Aid, it is a Reflection too much for a Soldier. You dont deserve to be freemen unless you can obtain it yourselves. when they arrive they will not put up with such treatment as your Army have done they will not serve Week after Week, without Meat without Cloathing, and paid in filthy rags. I despise my Countrymen, I wish I could say I was not born in America. I once gloried in it but am now ashamed of it. If you do your duty, tho' late, you may finish the War this Campaign, you must Immediately fill your Regiments, and pay your troops in Hard Money, they cannot exist as Soldiers otherwise.

The Insults and Neglects which the Army have met with from the Country, Beggars all description. it must Go no farther, they can endure it no longer. I have wrote in a Passion, Indeed I am scarce ever free from it. I am in Rags, have lain in the Rain on the Ground for 48 hours past, and only a Junk of fresh Beef and that without Salt to dine on this day, rec^d no pay since last December, Constitution complaining, and all this for my Cowardly Countrymen who flinch at the very time when their

Exertions are wanted, and hold their Purse Strings as tho' they would Damn the World, rather than part with a Dollar to their Army.

I will leave this page and ask your attention to the next. Inclosed you will receive an Order on Elijah Hubbard Esq^r Middletown for £3,000 which I wish to be prov^d and laid out for me in Cloathing, agreeable to following invoice. 3 and ½ Yards Superfine Blue B^d Cloth, 7 dozⁿ best white C^t Buttons for the same, 3 Yards Superfine White B^d Cloth, Lining for two Coats, Lining for two Jackets, indeed everything to make up the Cloth for Coats and the Under dress, also white Linning, proper for 4 Vests and 4 breeches, 3 pr boot Stockings thread, the Hatt I wrote for some time since. If I have Credit or can possibly obtain it for these Articles I wish them immediately, the sooner the better, my Red Coats I Cannot wear. Pray exert yourself for them, I stand in great need of everything mentioned.

Yours &c.

EB HUNTINGTON

Make my love, Compliments &c to my friends and believe that I much wish to see them and have for five Weeks expected it, but am now induced to believe I shall not see you soon.—Adieu.

XXIX. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.¹

WETHERSFIELD 27th November 1780

Dear Sir

By a letter from Major Talmadge, we are inform^d that last Week he went over to Long Island with a Party of 80 Men, that he marched to a place called Coram about 16 Miles from where he landed, indeed twas almost across the Island, where he attack^d Fort S^t George Garrison^d with 60 Men, Carried it and took about 40 Prisoners; on his Return to his boats, he burnt a Magazine of Forage of about 300 tons of Hay and return^d safe. in taking the Fort he had one man Wounded, tho' Slightly.²

Let me tell you this Town are about Procuring two fine Shirts for each of their Officers in the Line of the Army. Pray dont be behind hand (I want a Couple) in doing good.

Congress have given, or rather resolved to give each of the Lads who took Andre, 200 dollars Annually in Specie for Life, and have order^d a Silver Medal to be given each of them, with a Copy of the Resolve in their favor. By letters from Camp, I find that I am Arranged on the New Establishment, which is by no means pleasing; I have wrote my friends in hopes to get it Altered but fear I shall not be able.

After wishing my love to you I Subscribe myself, Yours Sincerely,

EBEN HUNTINGTON

¹ Cf. letter of the same day to Webb, in *Correspondence of Samuel B. Webb*, II. 314.

² See Thompson's *Long Island*, II. 484.

XXX. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

HARTFORD 2^d March 81

Dear Brother

Your favor respecting the State Notes was duly rec^d. at present the treasurer will not do anything about them. he says he can not untill some other business is Completed, nor can he tell how soon it will be in his power. I rec^d a line from Brother Joshua respecting a small Bill for Paper supplied the Forts at N London, the Committee of Pay table will give no orders in Conti: for that reason I have return^d the Bill by Doctor Turner that it may be properly made in State Money as that is the only Currency which the pay table will give orders in. I have also enclosed three setts of Bills for 12 dollars each in favor of Brother Jed^h also his Certificate, which beg you to deliver him, his other Matters which he wrote me about I shall attend to. (One letter to the family must excuse me at this time). I wish Brother Joshua to raise me £50 Solid. if it can be done no other way he must sell one of my State Notes, for as much as it will fetch if it is not above £50 State Money. I must raise that sum in hand at all Hazards.

With the most Affectionate feelings to the families I Subscribe myself

Your very Humble Serv^t

EBEN. HUNTINGTON.

State Money at Hartford is two and a half for one Conti: 75.

XXXI. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.

LIGHT INFANTRY CAMP DOBBS FERRY

Dear Sir

August 2^d 1781.

Since I left Norwich, I have not been favored with a line from you, but by letters lately rec^d from Sister Nancy¹ by Brother Jed^h, am inform^d my friends are in Usual health, and that no material Alteration has taken place in respect to our good Father. hope you will be able to inform me he has recover^d his Usual Health and Spirits. Nothing has happen^d lately worthy your information. Our Kingsbridge Expedition you must have long since had the Particulars of. hope soon to give you some intelligence of Consequence, altho at Present we remain very peaceable in Camp. The Enemy have no post without Kingsbridge except a small Garrison in Fort N 8, which is on (or rather near) Harlem Creek about a mile below Kingsbridge towards Morissania. they very seldom venture out more than a Mile this side Kingsbridge towards our Camp, except the Horse Thieves of Delancys.

From the Repeated Promises of his Excellency the Governor and Council to the Committee previous to their leaving Connecticut, we have from time encouraged the Officers and Soldiers to wait with Patience, and that they would without any Doubt receive some Money soon; they

¹ Ann Moore, second wife of General Jedidiah Huntington.

have waited with earnestness, but are now almost outrageous. They Complain of the Ill Usage they receive from the State. the More they Suffer the More the State insults them by their Neglect, you have no right to expect their Services a Moment Longer. they have served you from the 1st of Jan^y 77 and have rec^d but just their Wages for 77. the rest is due. you Obliged them to Loan you two Years, and now withhold the Interest ; They have since the Loaning of those two Years served you 18 Months, and have rec^d three months Nominal Pay in Old Continental Money (at 75 for one). we have born till we can bear no longer. you must pay us in Solids, or find other Servants, and those who ask no Wages. If we meet with such Treatment from you when our services are so much wanted, what can we expect at the Close of the Campaign (should it be Glorious) when you have no further need of our Services, but Insult and Injury, in a triplicate Proportion from what we have already rec^d should it be in your power, to inflict so great an Allowance from a Store which ought to be exhausted. We are serving with the French Army where the Officers dine in Luxury and give us frequent invitations to their tables, we can't go to them, because we can not return the Compliment. Cloath feed and Pay us and you may have any Services you wish, but you must not expect nor shall you receive but little more without. I do not aim at you personally, I can excuse you and many more, but the State at large, don't deserve freedom, nor no other People on Earth, who are neither willing to Contend for Freedom Personally, or pay those who will defend their Cowardly Souls. Think one Moment at the very time you ought to have had your troops all in the field Cloath^d and Disciplined (will say no more about pay) you are just forwarding your *three Months Men*, and these to be the Subject of the Drill during their Service.

Excuse me I am warm, and angry at the State, but still am yours Sincerely.

This letter will not be signed nor will you need any signature to know the Writer.

My Love to your good Lady and the rest of the Circle.

Joshua was to have forwarded some Salt fish and a Cag of Wine, I have hear^d nothing about them since I left Norwich tho' should be very happy to, or even to know whether they have been forwarded and are safe.

XXXII. TO ANDREW HUNTINGTON.¹

CAMP BEFORE YORK 10th October 1781

Dear Sir

Ten days since I wrote you by some Seamen bound to N London and Norwich who had been Captured at Sea by the Enemy and recaptured by our good Allies and Landed in this State, that they might

¹ Four subsequent letters (to Webb, 1782) are printed in the latter's correspondence, II. 387, 393, 401, 404.

return to their friends. at the time I wrote we had but just Disembarked in James River after coming down the Bay from the Head of Elk, since which I think I wrote, but by what Conveyance or when am not able to say. this will be forwarded to Gen^l Huntington, who takes Charge of all my letters bound farther Eastward. Since I wrote you we have removed as you see by the date of this. on our Approach the Enemy evacuated their outworks and began Strengthening their more interior ones. we have alter^d their abandoned out works, and turn^d them against York and since then run our first Parallel and built our Batteries on it and open^d them Yesterday. at present we have about 30 heavy pieces open^d on the town, but in 6 Days more unless his Lordship Complains of our fire, we shall have upwards of Ninety including Mortars to tieze him with, which must Inevitably from his Situation oblige him to Surrender.

Yours sincerely without Signature